

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 664
By Graves

A RESOLUTION to commend the members of the Jason Foundation, Inc. for their efforts to combat teen suicide.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it exceedingly alarming that our nation loses more than one hundred young lives to suicide each week; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the second leading cause of death for college-aged youth, third for those ages fifteen to twenty-four, and fourth for those ages ten to fourteen; and

WHEREAS, more teenagers and young adults die of suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease combined; and

WHEREAS, teen suicide knows no racial, economic, or social barriers and is a significant concern in our state; in a 2001 survey of Tennessee's youth, 19.1% admitted that they had "seriously" considered suicide, 14% had made a suicide plan, and 8.6% had attempted suicide within the past year; and

WHEREAS, on July 16, 1997, Jason Flatt tragically took a position among these statistics; thereafter, his father, Mr. A. Clark Flatt resolved to organize people and corporations to devise methods to combat the circumstances that drive young people to take their lives; and

WHEREAS, that resolve gave birth to the Jason Foundation, Inc., which is dedicated to fighting teen suicide through parent seminars, teen seminars, direct personal contact with family members, community support groups for survivors of suicide victims, intervention, and working with school boards to implement awareness/prevention programs; and

WHEREAS, a key feature is a preventive program using education and peer support in a kit; entitled "A Promise For Tomorrow" it is designed so that school and church teachers and

other youth workers can present the program, which is distributed at no cost upon request, in an effective and professional manner; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the Jason Foundation began Project Tennessee in collaboration with the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, and the Tennessee Department of Education to offer awareness and prevention programs to every middle school and high school in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Project has reached over 660 schools to date, with a theme of "We chose not to be silent" that was created by the Foundation's Teen Board and the Hendersonville High School DECA team; and

WHEREAS, through these efforts, the Jason Foundation is helping to create an environment in Tennessee that is conducive to the prevention of teen suicide, which Dr. David Satcher Surgeon General of the United States has termed the leading preventable cause of death in our nation; and

WHEREAS, such an important effort, designed to combat a major cause of the loss of our children and the resultant grief and shattered lives of survivors, is deserving of our deepest gratitude and greatest support; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we express our profound admiration and appreciation to the officers and members of the Jason Foundation, Inc. for their enduring efforts to combat the scourge of youth suicide.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our deep concern for the rising incidence of suicide among the youth of this state and our nation and express our heartfelt condolences to each family that has lost a member to such a tragedy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.